

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

soldiers, that will no more please Him than did the worship of the Golden Calf.¹

At Birgitta's bidding, the hermit-bishop Alfonso brought this letter to Perugia, and entrusted it to the Count of Nola for transmission to the Pope. A copy was shown to the Count and to a sinister personage, of whom more presently, the papal nuncio, the Abbot of Marmoutier, and then destroyed, after its contents had been communicated to Cardinal d'Estaing, as also to Gomez Albornoz, who had been converted by Birgitta and was then holding Spoleto for the Church. But there was one significant passage in the revelation which was reserved for Gregory alone. "Unless the Pope," said Birgitta to Alfonso (speaking in the person of the Blessed Virgin), "comes to Italy at the time and in the year appointed, the lands of the Church, which are now united under his sway and obedience, will be divided in the hands of his enemies. To augment the tribulation of the Pope, he will not only hear, but will also see with his own eyes that what I say is true, nor will he be able with all the might of his power to reduce the said lands of the Church to their former state of obedience and peace. These words that I now say to thee are not yet to be told or written to the Abbot, for the seed is hidden in the earth until it fructifies in ears of corn."² This prophecy was soon to be fulfilled to the letter, and in part at the Abbot's cost.

Gregory, who had bidden the Abbot demand an explanation of the first revelation, returned no answer to the second; and Birgitta, seeing no hope of his present coming, started for the Holy Land, in the autumn of 1371, accompanied by Alfonso, her two sons, Birger and Charles, and others. At Naples, Charles fell in love with the still beautiful Queen, and Giovanna, allured by the splendid manhood of the young northern warrior, returned his passion. Both of them were married, but the Queen is said to have contemplated obtaining a divorce and to have suggested the same to him. An adulterous connection of this kind seemed

¹ *Revelationes*, IV. 139, 140.

^a 73;V., IV. 140. Cf. Comtesse de Fhigny, *Sainte Brigitte de StdJe*, pp. 397-402.